Annex

Accra Agenda for Action

(Endorsed at the Third High-level Forum on Aid Effectiveness, Accra, 2-4 September 2008)

Ministers of developing and donor countries responsible for promoting development and Heads of multilateral and bilateral development institutions endorsed the following statement in Accra, Ghana, on 4 September 2008 to accelerate and deepen implementation of the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness (2 March 2005).

This is a moment of opportunity

1. We are committed to eradicating poverty and promoting peace and prosperity by building stronger, more effective partnerships that enable developing countries to realise their development goals.

2. There has been progress. Fifteen years ago, two out of five people lived in extreme poverty; today, that figure has been reduced to one in four. However, 1.4 billion people—most of them women and girls—still live in extreme poverty,[1] and access to safe drinking water and health care remains a major issue in many parts of the world. In addition, new global challenges—rising food and fuel prices and climate change—threaten the advances against poverty many countries have made.

3. We need to achieve much more if all countries are to meet the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Aid is only one part of the development picture. Democracy, economic growth, social progress, and care for the environment are the prime engines of development in all countries. Addressing inequalities of income and opportunity within countries and between states is essential to global progress. Gender equality, respect for human rights, and environmental sustainability are cornerstones for achieving enduring impact on the lives and potential of poor women, men, and children. It is vital that all our policies address these issues in a more systematic and coherent way.

4. In 2008, three international conferences will help us accelerate the pace of change: the Accra High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness, the United Nations High Level Event on the MDGs in New York, and the Financing for Development follow-up meeting in Doha. Today at Accra, we are leading the way, united in a common objective: to unlock the full potential of aid in achieving lasting development results.

We are making progress, but not enough

5. Learning from our past successes and failures in development co-operation and building on the 2003 Rome Declaration on Harmonisation, in March 2005 we adopted an ambitious set of reforms: the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness. In the Paris Declaration, we agreed to develop a genuine partnership, with developing countries clearly in charge of their own development processes. We also agreed to hold each other accountable for achieving concrete development results. Three and one-half years later, we are reconvening in Accra to review progress and address the challenges that now face us.

6. Evidence shows we are making progress, but not enough. A recent evaluation shows that the Paris Declaration has created powerful momentum to change the way developing countries and donors work together on the ground. According to the 2008 Monitoring Survey, a large number of developing countries have improved their management of public funds. Donors, in turn, are increasingly improving their co-ordination at country level. Yet the pace of progress is too slow. Without further reform and faster action we will not meet our 2010 commitments and targets for improving the quality of aid.

We will take action to accelerate progress

7. Evidence shows that we will need to address three major challenges to accelerate progress on aid effectiveness:

8. *Country ownership is key.* Developing country governments will take stronger leadership of their own development policies, and will engage with their parliaments and citizens in shaping those policies. Donors will support them by respecting countries' priorities, investing in their human resources and institutions, making greater use of their systems to deliver aid, and increasing the predictability of aid flows.

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[1] These figures are based on a recent World Bank study that found the poverty line to be $1.25 a day in 2005 prices.

9. *Building more effective and inclusive partnerships.* In recent years, more development actors—middle-income countries, global funds, the private sector, civil society organisations—have been increasing their contributions and bringing valuable experience to the table. This also creates management and co-ordination challenges. Together, all development actors will work in more inclusive partnerships so that all our efforts have greater impact on reducing poverty.

10. *Achieving development results—and openly accounting for them—must be at the heart of all we do.* More than ever, citizens and taxpayers of all countries expect to see the tangible results of development efforts. We will demonstrate that our actions translate into positive impacts on people's lives. We will be accountable to each other and to our respective parliaments and governing bodies for these outcomes.

11. Without addressing these obstacles to faster progress, we will fall short of our commitments and miss opportunities to improve the livelihoods of the most vulnerable people in the world. Therefore, we are reaffirming the commitments we made in the Paris Declaration and, in this Accra Agenda for Action, are agreeing on concrete and monitorable actions to accelerate progress to meet those commitments by 2010. We commit to continuing efforts in monitoring and evaluation that will assess whether we have achieved the commitments we agreed in the Paris Declaration and the Accra Agenda for Action, and to what extent aid effectiveness is improving and generating greater development impact.

Strengthening Country Ownership over Development

12. Developing countries determine and implement their development policies to achieve their own economic, social and environmental goals. We agreed in the Paris Declaration that this would be our first priority. Today, we are taking additional steps to turn this resolution into a reality.

We will broaden country-level policy dialogue on development

13. We will engage in open and inclusive dialogue on development policies. We acknowledge the critical role and responsibility of parliaments in ensuring country ownership of development processes. To further this objective we will take the following actions:

a) Developing country governments will work more closely with parliaments and local authorities in preparing, implementing and monitoring national development policies and plans. They will also engage with civil society organisations (CSOs).

b) Donors will support efforts to increase the capacity of all development actors—parliaments, central and local governments, CSOs, research institutes, media and the private sector—to take an active role in dialogue on development policy and on the role of aid in contributing to countries' development objectives.

c) Developing countries and donors will ensure that their respective development policies and programmes are designed and implemented in ways consistent with their agreed international commitments on gender equality, human rights, disability and environmental sustainability.

Developing countries will strengthen their capacity to lead and manage development

14. Without robust capacity—strong institutions, systems, and local expertise—developing countries cannot fully own and manage their development processes. We agreed in the Paris Declaration that capacity development is the responsibility of developing countries, with donors playing a supportive role, and that technical co-operation is one means among others to develop capacity. Together, developing countries and donors will take the following actions to strengthen capacity development:

a) Developing countries will systematically identify areas where there is a need to strengthen the capacity to perform and deliver services at all levels—national, sub-national, sectoral, and thematic—and design strategies to address them. Donors will strengthen their own capacity and skills to be more responsive to developing countries' needs.

b) Donors' support for capacity development will be demand-driven and designed to support country ownership. To this end, developing countries and donors will i) jointly select and manage technical co-operation, and ii) promote the provision of technical co-operation by local and regional resources, including through South-South co-operation.

c) Developing countries and donors will work together at all levels to promote operational changes that make capacity development support more effective.

We will strengthen and use developing country systems to the maximum extent possible

15. Successful development depends to a large extent on a government's capacity to implement its policies and manage public resources through its own institutions and systems. In the Paris Declaration, developing countries committed to strengthen their systems[2] and donors committed to use those systems to the maximum extent possible. Evidence shows, however, that developing countries and donors are not on track to meet these commitments. Progress in improving the quality of country systems varies considerably among countries; and even when there are good-quality country systems, donors often do not use them. Yet it is recognised that using country systems promotes their development. To strengthen and increase the use of country systems, we will take the following actions:

a) Donors agree to use country systems as the first option for aid programmes in support of activities managed by the public sector.

b) Should donors choose to use another option and rely on aid delivery mechanisms outside country systems (including parallel project implementation units), they will transparently state the rationale for this and will review their positions at regular intervals. Where use of country systems is not feasible, donors will establish additional safeguards and measures in ways that strengthen rather than undermine country systems and procedures.

c) Developing countries and donors will jointly assess the quality of country systems in a country-led process using mutually agreed diagnostic tools. Where country systems require further strengthening, developing countries will lead in defining reform programmes and priorities. Donors will support these reforms and provide capacity development assistance.

d) Donors will immediately start working on and sharing transparent plans for undertaking their Paris commitments on using country systems in all forms of development assistance; provide staff guidance on how these systems can be used; and ensure that internal incentives encourage their use. They will finalise these plans as a matter of urgency.

e) Donors recollect and reaffirm their Paris Declaration commitment to provide 66% of aid as programme-based approaches. In addition, donors will aim to channel 50% or more of government-to-government assistance through country fiduciary systems, including by increasing the percentage of assistance provided through programme based approaches.

Building More Effective and Inclusive Partnerships for Development

16. Aid is about building partnerships for development. Such partnerships are most effective when they fully harness the energy, skills and experience of all development actors—bilateral and multilateral donors, global funds, CSOs, and the private sector. To support developing countries' efforts to build for the future, we resolve to create partnerships that will include all these actors.

We will reduce costly fragmentation of aid

17. The effectiveness of aid is reduced when there are too many duplicating initiatives, especially at country and sector levels. We will reduce the fragmentation of aid by improving the complementarity of donors' efforts and the division of labour among donors, including through improved allocation of resources within sectors, within countries, and across countries. To this end:

a) Developing countries will lead in determining the optimal roles of donors in supporting their development efforts at national, regional and sectoral levels. Donors will respect developing countries' priorities, ensuring that new arrangements on the division of labour will not result in individual developing countries receiving less aid.

b) Donors and developing countries will work together with the Working Party on Aid Effectiveness to complete good practice principles on country-led division of labour. To that end, they will elaborate plans to ensure the maximum coordination of development co-operation. We will evaluate progress in implementation starting in 2009.

c) We will start dialogue on international division of labour across countries by June 2009.

d) We will work to address the issue of countries that receive insufficient aid.

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[2] These include, but are not limited to, systems for public financial management, procurement, audit, monitoring and evaluation, and social and environmental assessment.

We will increase aid's value for money

18. Since the Paris Declaration was agreed in 2005, OECD-DAC donors have made progress in untying their aid. A number of donors have already fully untied their aid, and we encourage others to do so. We will pursue, and accelerate, these efforts by taking the following actions:

a) OECD-DAC donors will extend coverage of the 2001 DAC Recommendation on Untying Aid to non-LDC HIPCs[3] and will improve their reporting on the 2001 DAC Recommendation.

b) Donors will elaborate individual plans to further untie their aid to the maximum extent.

c) Donors will promote the use of local and regional procurement by ensuring that their procurement procedures are transparent and allow local and regional firms to compete. We will build on examples of good practice to help improve local firms' capacity to compete successfully for aid-funded procurement.

d) We will respect our international agreements on corporate social responsibility.

We welcome and will work with all development actors

19. The contributions of all development actors are more effective when developing countries are in a position to manage and co-ordinate them. We welcome the role of new contributors and will improve the way all development actors work together by taking the following actions:

a) We encourage all development actors, including those engaged in South-South co-operation, to use the Paris Declaration principles as a point of reference in providing development co-operation.

b) We acknowledge the contributions made by all development actors, and in particular the role of middle-income countries as both providers and recipients of aid. We recognise the importance and particularities of South-South cooperation and acknowledge that we can learn from the experience of developing countries. We encourage further development of triangular co-operation.

c) Global funds and programmes make an important contribution to development. The programmes they fund are most effective in conjunction with complementary efforts to improve the policy environment and to strengthen the institutions in the sectors in which they operate. We call upon all global funds to support country ownership, to align and harmonise their assistance proactively, and to make good use of mutual accountability frameworks, while continuing their emphasis on achieving results. As new global challenges emerge, donors will ensure that existing channels for aid delivery are used and, if necessary, strengthened before creating separate new channels that risk further fragmentation and complicate co-ordination at country level.

d) We encourage developing countries to mobilise, manage and evaluate their international cooperation initiatives for the benefit of other developing countries.

e) South-South co-operation on development aims to observe the principle of non-interference in internal affairs, equality among developing partners and respect for their independence, national sovereignty, cultural diversity and identity and local content. It plays an important role in international development co-operation and is a valuable complement to North-South co-operation.

We will deepen our engagement with civil society organisations

20. We will deepen our engagement with CSOs as independent development actors in their own right whose efforts complement those of governments and the private sector. We share an interest in ensuring that CSO contributions to development reach their full potential. To this end:

a) We invite CSOs to reflect on how they can apply the Paris principles of aid effectiveness from a CSO perspective.

b) We welcome the CSOs' proposal to engage with them in a CSO-led multistakeholder process to promote CSO development effectiveness. As part of that process, we will seek to i) improve co-ordination of CSO efforts with government programmes, ii) enhance CSO accountability for results, and iii) improve information on CSO activities.

c) We will work with CSOs to provide an enabling environment that maximises their contributions to development.

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[3] The 2001 DAC recommendation on Untying ODA to the Least Developed Countries (LDCs) covers 31 so-called Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPCs). The OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC) at its 2008 High Level Meeting agreed to extend the 2001 Recommendation to cover the remaining eight countries that are part of the HIPC initiative: Bolivia, Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Guyana, Honduras, Nicaragua and Republic of Congo.

We will adapt aid policies for countries in fragile situations

21. In the Paris Declaration, we agreed that aid effectiveness principles apply equally to development co-operation in situations of fragility, including countries emerging from conflict, but that these principles need to be adapted to environments of weak ownership or capacity. Since then, Principles for Good International Engagement in Fragile States and Situations have been agreed. To further improve aid effectiveness in these environments, we will take the following actions:

a) Donors will conduct joint assessments of governance and capacity and examine the causes of conflict, fragility and insecurity, engaging developing country authorities and other relevant stakeholders to the maximum extent possible.

b) At country level, donors and developing countries will work and agree on a set of realistic peace- and state-building objectives that address the root causes of conflict and fragility and help ensure the protection and participation of women. This process will be informed by international dialogue between partners and donors on these objectives as prerequisites for development.

c) Donors will provide demand-driven, tailored and co-ordinated capacity-development support for core state functions and for early and sustained recovery. They will work with developing countries to design interim measures that are appropriately sequenced and that lead to sustainable local institutions.

d) Donors will work on flexible, rapid and long-term funding modalities, on a pooled basis where appropriate, to i) bridge humanitarian, recovery and longer-term development phases, and ii) support stabilisation, inclusive peace building, and the building of capable, accountable and responsive states. In collaboration with developing countries, donors will foster partnerships with the UN System, international financial institutions and other donors.

e) At country level and on a voluntary basis, donors and developing countries will monitor implementation of the Principles for Good International Engagement in Fragile States and Situations, and will share results as part of progress reports on implementing the Paris Declaration.

Delivering and Accounting for Development Results

22. We will be judged by the impacts that our collective efforts have on the lives of poor people. We recognise that greater transparency and accountability for the use of development resources—domestic as well as external—are powerful drivers of progress.

We will focus on delivering results

23. We will improve our management for results by taking the following actions:

a) Developing countries will strengthen the quality of policy design, implementation and assessment by improving information systems, including, as appropriate, disaggregating data by sex, region and socioeconomic status.

b) Developing countries and donors will work to develop cost-effective results management instruments to assess the impact of development policies and adjust them as necessary. We will better co-ordinate and link the various sources of information, including national statistical systems, budgeting, planning, monitoring and country-led evaluations of policy performance.

c) Donors will align their monitoring with country information systems. They will support, and invest in strengthening, developing countries' national statistical capacity and information systems, including those for managing aid.

d) We will strengthen incentives to improve aid effectiveness. We will systematically review and address legal or administrative impediments to implementing international commitments on aid effectiveness. Donors will pay more attention to delegating sufficient authority to country offices and to changing organisational and staff incentives to promote behaviour in line with aid effectiveness principles.

We will be more accountable and transparent to our publics for results

24. Transparency and accountability are essential elements for development results. They lie at the heart of the Paris Declaration, in which we agreed that countries and donors would become more accountable to each other and to their citizens. We will pursue these efforts by taking the following actions:

a) We will make aid more transparent. Developing countries will facilitate parliamentary oversight by implementing greater transparency in public financial management, including public disclosure of revenues, budgets, expenditures, procurement and audits. Donors will publicly disclose regular, detailed and timely information on volume, allocation and, when available, results of development expenditure to enable more accurate budget, accounting and audit by developing countries.

b) We will step up our efforts to ensure that—as agreed in the Paris Declaration—mutual assessment reviews are in place by 2010 in all countries that have endorsed the Declaration. These reviews will be based on country results reporting and information systems complemented with available donor data and credible independent evidence. They will draw on emerging good practice with stronger parliamentary scrutiny and citizen engagement. With them we will hold each other accountable for mutually agreed results in keeping with country development and aid policies.

c) To complement mutual assessment reviews at country level and drive better performance, developing countries and donors will jointly review and strengthen existing international accountability mechanisms, including peer review with participation of developing countries. We will review proposals for strengthening the mechanisms by end 2009.

d) Effective and efficient use of development financing requires both donors and partner countries to do their utmost to fight corruption. Donors and developing countries will respect the principles to which they have agreed, including those under the UN Convention against Corruption. Developing countries will address corruption by improving systems of investigation, legal redress, accountability and transparency in the use of public funds. Donors will take steps in their own countries to combat corruption by individuals or corporations and to track, freeze, and recover illegally acquired assets.

We will continue to change the nature of conditionality to support ownership

25. To strengthen country ownership and improve the predictability of aid flows, donors agreed in the Paris Declaration that, whenever possible, they would draw their conditions from developing countries' own development policies. We reaffirm our commitment to this principle and will continue to change the nature of conditionality by taking the following actions:

a) Donors will work with developing countries to agree on a limited set of mutually agreed conditions based on national development strategies. We will jointly assess donor and developing country performance in meeting commitments.

b) Beginning now, donors and developing countries will regularly make public all conditions linked to disbursements.

c) Developing countries and donors will work together at the international level to review, document and disseminate good practices on conditionality with a view to reinforcing country ownership and other Paris Declaration Principles by increasing emphasis on harmonised, results-based conditionality. They will be receptive to contributions from civil society.

We will increase the medium-term predictability of aid

26. In the Paris Declaration, we agreed that greater predictability in the provision of aid flows is needed to enable developing countries to effectively plan and manage their development programmes over the short and medium term. As a matter of priority, we will take the following actions to improve the predictability of aid:

a) Developing countries will strengthen budget planning processes for managing domestic and external resources and will improve the linkages between expenditures and results over the medium term.

b) Beginning now, donors will provide full and timely information on annual commitments and actual disbursements so that developing countries are in a position to accurately record all aid flows in their budget estimates and their accounting systems.

c) Beginning now, donors will provide developing countries with regular and timely information on their rolling three- to five-year forward expenditure and/or implementation plans, with at least indicative resource allocations

that developing countries can integrate in their medium-term planning and macroeconomic frameworks. Donors will address any constraints to providing such information.

d) Developing countries and donors will work together at the international level on ways of further improving the medium-term predictability of aid, including by developing tools to measure it.

Looking Forward

27. The reforms we agree on today in Accra will require continued high level political support, peer pressure, and co-ordinated action at global, regional, and country levels. To achieve these reforms, we renew our commitment to the principles and targets established in the Paris Declaration, and will continue to assess progress in implementing them.

28. The commitments we agree today will need to be adapted to different country circumstances—including in middle-income countries, small states and countries in situations of fragility. To this end, we encourage developing countries to design—with active support from donors—country-based action plans that set out time-bound and monitorable proposals to implement the Paris Declaration and the Accra Agenda for Action.

29. We agree that, by 2010, each of us should meet the commitments we made on aid effectiveness in Paris and today in Accra, and to reach beyond these commitments where we can. We agree to reflect and draw upon the many valuable ideas and initiatives that have been presented at this High Level Forum. We agree that challenges such as climate change and rising food and fuel prices underline the importance of applying aid effectiveness principles. In response to the food crisis, we will develop and implement the global partnership on agriculture and food swiftly, efficiently and flexibly.

30. We ask the Working Party on Aid Effectiveness to continue monitoring progress on implementing the Paris Declaration and the Accra Agenda for Action and to report back to the Fourth High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness in 2011. We recognise that additional work will be required to improve the methodology and indicators of progress of aid effectiveness. In 2011, we will undertake the third round of monitoring that will tell us whether we have achieved the targets for 2010 agreed in Paris in 2005.[4] To carry forward this work, we will need to develop institutionalised processes for the joint and equal partnership of developing countries and the engagement of stakeholders.

31. We recognise that aid effectiveness is an integral part of the broader financing for development agenda. To achieve development outcomes and the MDGs we need to meet our commitments on both aid quality and aid volumes. We ask the Secretary General of the United Nations to transmit the conclusions of the Third High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness to the High Level Event on the MDGs in New York later this month and the Financing for Development Review meeting in Doha in November 2008. We welcome the contribution that the ECOSOC Development Co-operation Forum is making to the international dialogue and to mutual accountability on aid issues. We call upon the UN development system to further support the capacities of developing countries for effective management of development assistance.

32. Today, more than ever, we resolve to work together to help countries across the world build the successful future all of us want to see—a future based on a shared commitment to overcome poverty, a future in which no countries will depend on aid.

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[4] We will have that information available for the Fourth High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness in 2011, along with comprehensive second phase evaluations of the implementation of the Paris Declaration and the Accra Agenda for Action as of 2010. Attention will also be paid to improving and developing communications on aid effectiveness for long-term development success and broad-based public support.